

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 02577 280633Z

16

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

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VOE-00 SCA-01 /085 W

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R 280510Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5559

INFO AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC

UNCLAS CANBERRA 2577

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: VS, AS, PFOR, SREF

SUBJECT: LEADING NEWSPAPERS AND OPPOSITION LEADERS

DENOUNCE GOA'S POLICIES ON RECEIVING VIETNAMESE

REFUGEES.

REF: CANBERRA 2545

1. SUMMARY: OPPOSITION LEADER MALCOLM FRASER AND STORIES AND EDITORIALS IN APRIL 28 EDITIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS DAILY NEWSPAPERS, THE MELBOURNE AGE, AND THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, AND THE AUSTRALIAN DENOUNCED THE GOA'S POLICIES ON RECEIVING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. END SUMMARY.

2. APRIL 28 MELBOURNE AGE AND SYDNEY MORNING HERALD CARRIED A LEAD STORY FILED BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON FROM HONG KONG. THE AGE GAVE THE STORY THE BANNER HEADLINE - ASHAMED OF GOVERNMENT. RICHARDSON BEGINS QTE I HAVE NEVER FELT ASHAMED OF MY GOVERNMENT BEFORE. BUT I FELT PROFOUNDLY UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 CANBER 02577 280633Z

ASHAMED OF IT IN SAIGON ON FRIDAY.

3. QTE WHEN THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY CLOSED DOWN AND THE LAST TWO RAAF HERCULES C-130 TRANSPORT PLANES TOUCHED OFF FOR BANGKOK, THEY LEFT BEHIND SEVERAL HUNDRED VIETNAMESE WHO SHOULD BE IN AUSTRALIA OR ON THEIR WAY THERE.

4. QTE. THIS MISERABLE AND MEAN-HEARTED BETRAYAL WAS THE CULMINATION OF THREE WEEKS OF PROCRASTINATION BY RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES IN CANBERRA. END QTE

5. RICHARDSON GOES ON TO NOTE THAT AMONG THE VIETNAMESE LEFT BEHIND WERE LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN SAIGON.

6. OPPOSITION LEADER FRASER, IN A STATEMENT ISSUED OVER THE WEEKEND, SAID THAT AUSTRALIA'S HASTY HANDLING OF THE SAIGON EVACUATION WAS QTE DISPICABLE END QTE. HE SAID IT APPEARED THAT AUSTRALIA HAD TURNED ITS BACK ON MANY THOUSANDS OF VIETNAMESE WHO SUPPORTED THE CAUSE OF DEMOCRACY. AND IT HAD FINALLY REJECTED A QTE HANDFUL FO PEOPLE WHO WORKED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF. END QTE

7. MR. FRASER SAID THAT IF REPORTS PUBLISHED IN THE MELBOURNE AGE ON APRIL 26 WERE CORRECT THEN IT WAS A QTE SHAMEFUL DAY END QTE FOR AUSTRALIA. THE APRIL 26 EDITION OF THE AGE CARRIED STORIES ABOUT LOCAL MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY'S SAIGON STAFF WHO HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND WHEN THE EMBASSY WAS CLOSED.

8. EDITORIALS IN APRIL 28 EDITIONS OF THE MELBOURNE AGE, THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, AND THE AUSTRALIAN WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE REFUGEE PROGRAM. THE AGE EDITORIAL TITLED QTE SHAMEFUL BLOW TO REFUGEES END QTE STATED: QTE FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT PURPORTS TO SET SUCH A HIGH VALUE ON MORALITY AND HUMANITY IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE WHITLAM ADMINISTRATION'S EVIDENT MISHANDLING OF THE EVACUATION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES LEAVES MUCH TO BE EXPLAINED AND, IT WOULD SEEM, LITTLE TO BE EXCUSED. THE INDICTMENT THAT EMERGES FROM THE ON-THE-SPOT REPORTS OF OUR SOUTH-EAST ASIA CORRESPONDENT (MICHAEL UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 CANBER 02577 280633Z

RICHARDSON), FROM THE TEARFUL STORIES OF VIETNAMESE IN AUSTRALIA SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES IN THE BELEAGUED SOUTH, AND FROM THE UNHEEDED PLEAS OF CONCERNED AND PROMINENT AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS, MAY YET PROVE TO BE THE MOST SHAMEFUL EPISODE IN THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT'S CHEQUERED RECORD IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. END QTE

9. THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD EDITORIAL ENTITLED QTE WITHOUT

HONOR END QTE STATES: QTE VERY MANY AUSTRALIANS MUST BE DEEPLY ANGRY AND ASHAMED ABOUT THE CALLOUSNESS OF OUR GOVERNMENT'S SCUTTLE FROM SAIGON AND ITS ABANDONMENT -BETRAYAL IS NOT TOO STRONG - OF HUNDREDS OF VIETNAMESE ENTITLED TO EXPECT OUR ASSISTANCE TO FLEE THE FATE AWAITING THE MARKED-DOWN ENEMIES OF HANOI. AS A NATION WE HAVE ACTED CONTEMPTIBLY: WE ARE AS A NATION, IT MUST APPEAR, SO BENT ON EVACUATING OUR NATIONALS AND SO INDIFFERENT TO THE JEOPARDY OF OUR VIETNAMESE FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES THAT WE FAILED EVEN TO HELP THOSE EMPLOYED BY OUR EMBASSY.

10. QTE...THE FAULT WAS NOT AT OUR EMBASSY; AT THE END ITS OFFICIALS WERE HUMILIATINGLY SEEKING AMERICAN HELP TO TAKE OUR DEPENDENTS OUT. THE FAULT WAS IN CANBERRA; AND WHAT AN ATTITUDE ITS EXCUSES NOW REVEAL. IT IS SAID THAT THE INNER QTE RIGIDITY END INNER QTE OF SAIGON WAS TO BLAME. THIS INNER QTE RIGIDITY END INNER QTE IS NOT PREVENTING THE AMERICAN FROM FLYING OUT SOME 6,000 VIETNAMESE A DAY. HOW TO EXPLAIN THAT ANOMALY? SIMPLE - MR. MORRISON TELLS US THE AMERICANS ARE ACTING ILLEGALLY. LET US BE PROUD OF THE COOL HEADS IN CANBERRA, STEADFASTLY RESISTING THE TEMPTATION IN A DESPERATE SITUATION TO GIVE HELP ILLEGALLY EVEN THOUGH THIS MEANT THAT VIRTUALLY NO HELP COULD BE GIVEN AT ALL.

11. QTE. NOTHING MORE CAN BE DONE BECAUSE, MR. MORRISON EXPLAINED OF INNER QTE THE UNACCEPTABLE DANGER END INNER QTE TO EMBASSY STAFF AND THE CREWS OF RAAF AIRCRAFT. HOW RESPONSIBLE, HOW PRUDENT IS OUR GOVERNMENT COMPARED WITH THOSE INNER QTE MANIACS END INNER QTE IN WASHINGTON - AS ONE OF OUR MINISTERS CALLED THEM - HEARTLESSLY RISKING THEIR MEN'S SAFETY TO HELP, IN HONOUR, FRIENDS AND ALLIES IN FEAR OF THEIR LIVES. END QTE  
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PAGE 04 CANBER 02577 280633Z

12. THE APRIL 28 EDITORIAL IN THE AUSTRALIAN ENTITLED QTE DID WE TRY HARD ENOUGH END QTE STATES: QTE....BUT ONE FACT EMERGES CLEARLY AND THAT IS THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S NIGGARDLY AND DESULTORY PERFORMANCE DURING THE EVACUATION OPERATION OF LAST WEEK. IT WAS CAPPED BY THE CLOSURE OF OUR EMBASSY IN SAIGON AND AUSTRALIA'S FAILURE TO RESCUE EVEN SOME OF THE VIETNAMESE STAFF WHO HAVE SERVED US LOYALLY AND TO WHOM WE HAVE CLEAR OBLIGATIONS. END QTE.  
GREEN

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